

December 22, 1998

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Dr. C.W. Jameson  
NTP Report on Carcinogens  
79 Alexander Drive, Room 3217  
PO Box 12233  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Dear Dr. Jameson:

I am writing to urge you to list environmental tobacco smoke as a known carcinogen.

More people die from environmental tobacco smoke than die from AIDS, though you would never know it—the public is wholly underinformed on the dangers of exposure to tobacco smoke. Placing ETS on the list of known carcinogens is a step toward public health education.

In 1996, the Center for Disease Control reported that “nearly 9 out of 10 nonsmoking Americans are exposed to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS, or secondhand smoke), as measured by the levels of cotinine in their blood . . . over the last 2 to 3 days.” The American Lung Association estimates that 40,000 Americans die every year as a result of this exposure, from cancer and heart disease. Many of these deaths were people who chose not to use tobacco, but simply lived or worked around people who smoked.

Smoking, unlike other drugs, has a physical effect not only on the user, but on those around the user. I would never deny a smoker's right to harm themselves. But, like drinking and then driving, when the usage poses a threat to others, it becomes imperative that we protect the public well-being. Tobacco is the number 1 cause of death in the United States, and we should treat it accordingly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Holland', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas Holland